



**CFBA TESTIMONY ON SB 647 AN ACT STREAMLINING THE
LIQUOR CONTROL ACT & RB 7184 AN ACT CONCERNING THE
LIQUOR CONTROL ACT**

Board of Directors

Don Tuller
President
-West Simsbury

Paul Larson
1st Vice President
-Woodstock

Melissa Dziurgot
2nd Vice President
-Durham

Keith Bishop
Secretary/Treasurer
-Guilford

Mark Fonicello
-Stafford Springs

Candace Benyei
-Redding

Ray Holden
-Orange

Laura Marek
-Torrington

Frank Lutwinas
-Enfield

Rich Martin
-Westbrook

Kies Orr
-Thompson

Rachel Holden
-Orange

Debbi Tanner
-Brooklyn

Wayne Budney
-Lebanon

Executive Director

Bryan Hurlburt
78 Beaver Rd.
Suite 2A,
Wethersfield, CT 06109
860.768.1100
BryanH@cfba.org

February 27, 2019

Submitted by: Bryan Hurlburt, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association Executive Director

To the members of General Law:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 647 AN ACT STREAMLINING THE LIQUOR CONTROL ACT and RB 7184 AN ACT CONCERNING THE LIQUOR CONTROL ACT.

The CT Farm Bureau Association is a private, non-profit, membership organization representing nearly 3,000 CT families dedicated to elevating the status of agriculture in our state through education, market promotion, and legislative advocacy. In our state, agriculture is made up of over 6,000+ small businesses, contributes \$4 billion to CT's economy, employs 21,000 people, and works 436,000 acres of land.

Farm-based alcohol production has been a growing, bright spot for the industry. According to the University of Connecticut's "Economic Impacts of CT Agricultural Industry" (updated 2017), over eight years farm wineries nearly doubled their percentage of the total agricultural economy, growing from 4% to 7%. Direct sales over that period grew by approximately 125% in dollars, leading the entire industry in growth.

Consumers have demonstrated with their dollars that they are interested and willing to support this industry. Public policy can be changed to accommodate more of the demand for agritourism and direct marketing through parity, allowing farm-based wineries, breweries, distilleries, cideries, and meaderies equal access to serve this consumer demand.

CFBA has been advocating for an update to the Liquor Control Act that addresses the following points:

1. Allow cider license to sell by the glass on premises and do tastings
2. Allow those with Farm Winery Permit (manufacturing permit) to have both Catering and Restaurant permits
3. Allow Farm Wineries to also have a grocery beer permit if they otherwise qualify as a grocery per existing criteria
4. Allow local Farm Wineries and Hard Cider permits to be able to sell locally produced wine and cider to supermarkets
5. Allow serving of CT Craft beers at Farm Wineries - reciprocity of Brew Pub permit that allows them to sell wine by the glass



6. Offsite tastings - sales by Farm Wineries, lift the 7 per year limit; tie in with catering permit where only need 24 hours' notice to DCP with catering abilities
7. Exempt farm-based producers from any bottle bill expansion
8. Allow Farm Winery to hold event-Festival for CT Grown ingredient wines, CT Farm Beers and ciders that they organize and manage under their farm winery permit at a location that is not on their own permitted property due to space-parking-logistics
9. Create definition for mead, or honey wine, and allow for commercial sales, as with other wines.

We are pleased to see that the General Law Committee has taken many of these issues into consideration with these two bills. We respectfully request that the following be included in any substitute bills:

- farm wineries be included in caterer and restaurant liquor permits, as brew pubs are
- cider be allowed up to 7% ABV, in concurrence with federal law
- allow wine kegs to be sold

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.